

September 14, 2005

Department of Agriculture and Food

Attn: Mike Johanns, Secretary

The following are thoughts with regard to the new farm bill coming up in the Legislature next year.

* I feel that farm conservation payments such as CRP need to reflect inflation in order to keep up with parity. CRP payments could be reduced by using the available monies to help new farmers rather than corporate people. We now have corporate people coming in and buying land with no intentions of keeping it for farming. They just want to own the land and this drives the price of the land up and the new younger farmer cannot keep up. We want to keep the price of agriculture down.

* Labeling of beef would keep the market open to farm trade and leave it up to the consumer. It would make it more competitive for the American farmer. There are not the same rules and restrictions in foreign countries, which enables them to produce food for a lower cost. Those who produce beef and bring it to market are not under the same rules and restrictions and can produce cheaper than we can. We are concerned that our food products are kept safe.

* Conservation programs such as NRCS need to be kept flexible and able to adapt to local needs rather than "one size fits all" concept.

* Research is critical in northern Utah. We depend on Utah State University and ask that you continue funding this through the new farm bill.

* We are concerned regarding trails and ATV's creating erosion of private land. We would like to see control of unwanted recreational use on private land. Trails spread noxious weeds and cause erosion where they cross private land and fields. We want to see preservation and conservation of valuable private land.

Respectfully,



Suzanne R. Rees, Commissioner
Box Elder County Commission